

5440-76 Reading/English Language Arts Specialist

The holder is authorized to function as a school-wide resource to support teachers to implement reading instruction and assessment practices that are informed by research, and to provide instruction in reading to students in grades PK-12. This endorsement is limited to holders of endorsements in early childhood, elementary education, middle grades, the secondary content areas, or special education.

In order to qualify for this endorsement, the candidate shall demonstrate the following:

Knowledge Standards:

Demonstrates knowledge of major theories and research-based principles and processes underlying language and literacy development, the components of effective literacy instruction and assessment at the student and school levels, a variety of literacy difficulties and intervention strategies, and strategies for facilitating best practice school-wide, as delineated in current national professional standards¹. Specifically, the educator understands and/or knows:

FOUNDATIONS:

Reading Comprehension and Fluency

Reading as the complex cognitive process of constructing meaning through the interaction of the reader's existing knowledge, the information suggested by the text, and the context of the reading situation

Components of reading comprehension, including strategies, vocabulary, and background/conceptual knowledge; ways that readers demonstrate comprehension; the distinction among independent, instructional, and frustration levels for individual students

Components of fluency, and appropriate ranges of reading fluency rates at different grade levels

Individual and textual factors that influence comprehension

The particular features of narrative and expository text across genres; and how readers' awareness of these features supports comprehension

Development of early and emergent literacy, including "concepts of print"

Literature and Media

A wide variety of quality, age-appropriate literature across genres, eras, cultures, and subcultures, including texts that support a range of reading abilities (e.g., decodable texts, leveled books) and resources for selecting and reviewing new materials

Critical theories of children's literature

Literary elements and strategies for analysis of literature and non-textual media

Language Development

The phonemic, morphemic, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic systems of language and their relationship to the reading and writing process

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Processes, principles, and dimensions of oral language acquisition and the relationship between oral language development and literacy development

Components of phonological processing

The development of the phonological skills essential to fluent decoding

The impact of physical, emotional, and cultural factors on language development and acquisition of reading and writing

Role of metacognition in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and representing visually

Elements of effective verbal and non-verbal communication

The process of second language acquisition, benefits and challenges second language acquisition poses to students' reading and writing development, and distinctions between language learning issues and learning disabilities

Word Study

Written language as a symbolic system based on the alphabet and orthography/spelling

The pronunciation of English phonemes and their graphemes

The developmental stages of spelling and morphological analysis

Speech to print correspondence at the sound, syllable pattern, and morphological levels, including predictability and patterns in English spelling, and grammatical endings and prefixes, suffixes, and roots

The differences among approaches to teaching phonics

Vocabulary development and its relationship to literacy acquisition

Relationships among phonology, decoding, orthography, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension

Written Expression

The writing development continuum from pre-writers through adults

Dimensions of quality writing, types of writing, the composing processes that writers use, and planning strategies most appropriate for particular kinds of writing

The conventions of written English

Uses of writing portfolios and approaches to assessing student writing, including appropriate benchmarks and standards for various ages/grade levels

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INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION:

The characteristics of and multiple causes of reading and writing difficulties, including how environmental/contextual and physiological/neurological factors can influence language, reading, and writing development

How contextual factors in the school can influence student learning and reading

A variety of individual and group instructional approaches, interventions, and supplemental programs to address specific difficulties in language, reading, and writing skills

ASSESSMENT:

Indicators of proficiency or difficulty in the various component areas of reading

Purposes for assessment in English language arts, including screening, diagnosis, evaluation of outcomes, guidance of instruction, and progress monitoring, and a range of valid and reliable assessment tools appropriate to each purpose

Ability to administer and interpret formal and informal assessments appropriate for different purposes

The importance of a feasible, comprehensive, and ongoing reading/language arts assessment program to evaluate student and school achievement of standards, and a variety of potential approaches to accomplish this

CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION:

Principles and practices of effective collaboration and consultation in learning environments

Purposes of and eligibility criteria for various local supplemental and intervention programs designed to help students with reading and writing difficulties

Appropriate roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and their supervision

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION:

How to interpret, analyze, and apply research findings to instructional practice

Strategies for classroom-based literacy research

Appropriate criteria for determining the effectiveness of reading programs, including comprehensive programs, supplemental, and intervention programs

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Performance Standards:

The Reading/English Language Arts Specialist provides individualized and small group reading and writing support and instruction to students based upon their needs; collaborates with other educators to plan individualized programs for students with reading or writing disabilities; and assists with school-wide implementation of best practices in reading instruction and assessment, including selection of materials, application of research to practice, provision of professional development in the area of reading, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's literacy program. Specifically, the educator:

INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION:

Based on student needs, supports students both in and out of their regular classrooms by explicitly and systematically teaching one or more of the components of literacy

Uses a wide variety of teacher and student-selected texts, including authentic and extended texts, appropriate to individual students' reading levels, in order to increase students' skills, sense of self-efficacy as readers, and motivation to read

Appropriately selects from a variety of active and engaging individual and/or small group instructional approaches, supplementary programs, or interventions, and adjusts pace and degree of explicit instruction, in order to meet the needs of individual students

Uses remedial and tutorial programs which have been validated by research

ASSESSMENT:

Uses the results of literacy assessments to target instruction, to flexibly group students for small groups when needed, to appropriately match students with reading material, and to assess curriculum specific learning outcomes as they relate to the students learning and program effectiveness

Uses a range of progress monitoring tools to regularly evaluate individual students' progress, and adjusts approaches, interventions, and supplementary instruction, depending on student progress

CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION:

Helps to develop individual educational plans for students with learning disabilities related to literacy

Implements and evaluates systemic strategies to include parents as partners in the literacy development of their children and adolescents

Collaborates with classroom teachers to support their implementation of research-based best practices in all aspects of literacy instruction and assessment, including modeling or co-teaching of specific instructional approaches, when appropriate; joint problem-solving; and/or assistance with the acquisition of resources

Facilitates the review and selection of instructional materials for literacy instruction, including those that are technology based

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RESEARCH AND EVALUATION:

Interprets research findings related to the improvement of reading instruction and assessment and communicates these findings to colleagues and the wider community, in order to improve classroom practice

Communicates information about school-wide literacy program and progress to administrators, other staff members, school-board members, parents, and the community

Assists with the program evaluation process to gauge the effectiveness of the school's literacy curriculum, using a variety of appropriate indicators of effectiveness

Facilitates and supports classroom-level research in literacy instruction

Additional Requirements:

A minimum of 18 credits in reading/English language arts.

A minimum of a practicum, or the equivalent, in reading instruction and assessment.

¹ e.g., *Standards for Reading Professionals* (1998, International Reading Association); *Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide* (2000, Learning First Alliance); *Standards for the English Language Arts* (1996, International Reading Association/National Council of Teachers of English)